

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01 CIAE-00
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E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS; ECON ENERG AG TS IT

SUBJ: TRANSMEDITERRANEAN GAS PIPELINE PROJECT

1. FOLLOWING INFORMATION ON THE ALGERIA/ITALY GAS PIPELINE PROJECT
CAME FROM A NOVEMBER 29, 1976, CONVERSATION WITH SICILIAN REGIONAL
GOVERNMENT ASSESSOR FOR INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE ON. GIOACCHINO
VENTIMIGLIA PSI), AND THE COMMISSIONER OF THE SICILIAN MINERALS
AGENCY (MS - ENTE MINERARIO SICILIANO), DR. GIANBATTISTA
TORREGROSSA.

-- ALTHOUGH PROJECT IS STILL MEETING TUNISIAN RESISTANCE OVER
TRANSIT RIGHTS, ENI, THE ITALIAN HYDROCARBONS AGENCY, IS PROPOSING

PAGE 02 RUFRSGG8541 C O N F I D E N T I A L

TO BUILD THE TUNISIAN PORTION OF THE PIPELINE AT ITS OWN EXPENSE,
IN EXCHANGE FOR FREE USE OF PIPELINE FOR A TWENTY-YEAR PERIOD, AT
THE END OF WHICH THIS PORTION WILL BECOME PROPERTY OF THE TUNISIAN
GOVERNMENT.

-- DIFFICULTIES HAVE ALSO DEVELOPED OVER PROJECTED LENGTH OF
PIPELINE AND THE AREAS IT WILL CROSS IN TUNISIA. BOTH TORREGROSSA
AND VENTIMIGLIA ARE HOPEFUL THESE PROBLEMS WILL BE SOLVED SOON AND
THAT TOTAL PROJECT WILL BE IN OPERATION BY 1979.

2. VENTIMIGLIA AND TORREGROSSA ALSO INDICATED THAT SOME WORK IS
BEING CARRIED OUT ON THE SICILIAN STRAITS PORTION OF THE PIPELINE

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WITH LAYING OF SOME PIPES IN THE MEDITERRANEAN ON EXPERIMENTAL BASIS.

ITALIANS HAVE COMPLETED ONE PIPE-LAYING VESSEL AND SECOND IS UNDER CONSTRUCTION.

3. TORREGROSSA ALSO INDICATED THAT ENI HAS AGREED TO PROVIDE AT ITS OWN EXPENSE THE ENTIRE METHANE DISTRIBUTION NETWORK IN SICILY. DISTRIBUTION NET IN TOWNS WOULD BE AT EXPENSE OF LOCAL GAS COMPANIES.

4. SICILIAN REGIONAL GOVERNMENT WILL HAVE FINANCIAL SHARE IN PORTION OF PIPELINE CROSSING STRAITS OF SICILY, A ROLE WHICH WILL PERMIT IT TO OFFER GAS AT REDUCED RATES AS INCENTIVE TO INDUSTRIAL DEVELOPMENT. COLLINS

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